

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 03577 050448Z

12
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 SAJ-01 OMB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /059 W
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R 040704Z APR 75
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4437
INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USLO PEKING
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE HONG KONG 3577

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CH
SUBJ: DEATH OF TUNG PI-WU

1. THE DEATH APRIL 2 OF 90-YEAR OLD TUNG PI-WU LEAVES MAO THE ONLY LIVING FOUNDER OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND RAISES THE POSSIBILITY OF COMPETITION TO FILL TUNG'S SEAT ON THE TOP-GOVERNING STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE POLITBURO. THE ELEVATION TO THIS COMMITTEE IN JANUARY OF TENG HSIAO-PING VICE LI TEH-SHENG CONTINUED THE NUMBER OF SEATS IN THAT ELITE CIRCLE AT NINE AND MAY HAVE SWUNG THE BALANCE TO 5-4 IN FAVOR OF THE MODERATES. ALTHOUGH THE SIZE OF THE COMMITTEE IS NOT FIXED AND THE PARTY IS NOT OBLIGATED TO COME UP WITH A REPLACEMENT FOR TUNG, HIMSELF A MODERATE, INTEREST GROUPS MAY JOCKEY TO PUT ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS FORWARD.

2. MAO HEADS THE FUNERAL COMMITTEE AND WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO MAKE A PERSONAL APPEARANCE AT THE FUNERAL IF HE CAN. ALL POLITBURO MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES, INCLUDING
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THE TROUBLED LI TEH-SHENG AND THE LONG-ABSENT WANG TUNG-

HSING, ARE ON THE FUNERAL COMMITTEE, LISTED BY NCNA AFTER THE STANDING COMMITTEE IN STROKE ORDER OF THEIR NAMES AND NOT BY RANK.

3. FROM ALL INDICATIONS THE FUNERAL IS GOING TO BE A MAJOR CEREMONIAL EVENT. NCNA'S APRIL 3 OBITUARY, LIKE THE FUNERAL COMMITTEE, IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND SINCE THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND ACCORDS TUNG TOP HONORS. IN PARTICULAR, HE IS NOT SAID TO HAVE FOLLOWED MAO OR SERVED HIS LINE, BUT IS PUT IN THE FRONT RANK OF PARTY FOUNDERS AND LEADERS OF IMMORTAL MERIT BY VIRTUE OF HIS OWN CONTRIBUTIONS. IN CALLING FOR THE NATION TO LEARN FROM TUNG, THE OBITUARY SOUNDS THE CURRENT THEMES OF UNITY AND THE GOAL OF BUILDING CHINA INTO A "POWERFUL MODERN SOCIALIST STATE."
CROSS

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NNN

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